

The Life of A Billionaire's Wife chapter 171-180

Chapter 171

The wedding ceremony was happening in a few days, so it would be a complete joke to the Larsons if the engagement was called off now.

Tiffany could not accept it, and neither could the Larsons.

"I've warned you earlier not to lay a finger on her again. Did you turn a deaf ear to my words?"

Matthew stood haughtily with his cold, hostile eyes filled with abhorrence as he glared at Tiffany

"Okay, I'll not lay a finger on her anymore. I swear... I swear I'll stay away from Veronica. Matthew, I was wrong. Can you please give me a chance..."

If Tiffany was not aware of Matthew's feelings toward Veronica before this, she would have deeply perceived how much he cared and loved Veronica as of this moment.

Despite Rachel's constant urge for Tiffany to remain calm and steady, Tiffany could not feign a calm look at all at this point of time.

The last time Matthew talked about canceling the marriage already scared her to wits. Therefore, no matter what, she could not allow that to happen again.

Tiffany was so determined to become the mistress of the Kings Family that she even swore to die as a Kings.

Beep... Beep...

Just then, Matthew's phone rang all of a sudden.

The coldness on Matthew's handsome face faded a little when he saw Elizabeth's caller ID lit on the screen when he took out his phone.

He darted a glance at the pathetic woman, who was kneeling on the floor, and answered the call. "Hey, Grandma."

"Hey, Matthew.

Are you free tonight? Bring Tiffany over for dinner. I've not seen her for a few days. I'm starting to miss her already."

Elizabeth's gentle voice emerged from the other end of the line. After saying that, she sighed in distress, which imperceptibly gave a sorrowful impression.

Matthew knew Elizabeth was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, so she was stressed and desired to have a grandchild even more.

Tightening his grip on the phone, Matthew furrowed his brows with a slightly resigned look. "Alright."

"Great. I'll ask the servants to prepare dinner then. If it's not that Veronica had gone back to her hometown, I'd like her to come along too."

Matthew could not tell whether Elizabeth was murmuring to herself or talking to him.

"Alright," he hummed in response and hung up the call.

Thereafter, he kept away his phone slowly, bent down, and gently patted Tiffany's cheek. "If this happens again, you will never be able to step foot in Bloomstead!"

With that, Matthew shoved away Tiffany's hand and walked away directly.

After opening the door, he was surprised to see Floch and Rachel standing at the door with a cup of tea in each of their hands.

"M-Matthew?"

Floch peeked at the situation inside the bedroom and smiled awkwardly at Matthew, who cast a cold glance at the two before heading downstairs directly to leave.

Floch and Rachel stood at the spot as they watched Matthew leaving hotfoot. Then, they rushed into the bedroom to see Tiffany sitting at the edge of the bed in a daze with her head lowered.

"Tiffy, Tiffy, what's the matter?" Brokenhearted, Rachel walked over to Tiffany and held her hand while showing concern.

"Did he become aware of Veronica's matter?" Floch hit the bullseye.

Looking downcast, Tiffany glanced at her parents with dead eyes and said wearily, "I'm tired and would like to sleep for a while."

After that, she pulled the blanket over herself and lay with her back facing the couple without saying anything further.

Meanwhile, Veronica and Yvonne met up with Monica Lewis, an ex-director of a wedding planning company.

The three of them had some discussion, and Veronica told Monica about her ideas. Toward the end, both of them reached an agreement for Monica to assume the role of a part-time wedding planner. All she needed to do was to provide proposal plans and did not have to work in the office on a daily basis.

It was a pleasant meetup, and Veronica was elated for having recruited such a talented teammate.

Later on, Veronica went online to order a birthday cake for Tony and requested for it to be delivered to her hometown.

Then, she used her phone to search for companies that were seeking to transfer ownership and successfully found a few wedding planning companies. After checking out the companies along with Yvonne, they found a wedding planner company, which was currently still running, in the shortest time and signed the transfer of ownership agreement. At the same time, they retained all the employees in the said company.

By the time everything was settled, it was already six in the evening.

Just as Veronica was about to treat Yvonne to dinner to thank her, Matthew called her.

The reason she spent a huge amount of money today to acquire a wedding planning company was exactly to earn money from Matthew.

To Veronica, Matthew was her greatest source of income now and she couldn't afford to offend him.

So, she answered his call immediately and said in a fawning manner, "Hey, Bro! What's up?"

"Where are you now?"

"I-I'm outside."

"Grandma requested for you to come to the Kings Residence for dinner. I'll come and pick you up now," Matthew said in a demanding tone as he had no intention to discuss it with Veronica at all.

Veronica's eyes lit up as she nodded and agreed instantly. "Sure. I'll send you my location so you can come and pick me up."

After that, she hung up the call and said to Yvonne apologetically, "I'm so sorry. Yvie.

An urgent matter came up last minute and Matthew requires my help. So, I can't bring you to dinner today anymore."

Yvonne shrugged indifferently and said, "No worries. There's always next time."

"Sure. No problem."

"Alright, I'll go off first then."

"Thanks, Yvie!"

Veronica waved at Yvonne and smiled cheekily after seeing the latter get into her car and left. "Now, I get to save one meal's worth of cash."

In fact, Veronica was reluctant to spend again after forking out a huge sum of money to take over the wedding planning company.

After settling everything, she made a call to Tony, whose birthday was today, to wish him a happy birthday. Then, the two continued chatting for a while before they hung up the call. Following that, Veronica transferred 10,000 to Tony via phone and sent a voice message to him on WhatsApp. "Dad, I've transferred 10,000 to you as your birthday gift."

Veronica adopted a joyful tone when she talked with Tony over the phone, but in fact, she felt sorry for Tony and Daniella.

She wished to transfer more money to them, but at the same time, she was worried that they would be concerned about where the money came from if the sum of money transferred was too huge.

Screech

Suddenly, a sedan car stopped in front of her.

Seeing the familiar silver-gray sedan car, Veronica opened the car door and got into

Seated in the driver seat, Matthew darted a nonchalant glance at Veronica with a complicated expression.

"Why did you tell me Grandma invited me over for dinner on such short notice?" she asked.

However, out of her expectation, Matthew blurted, "Are you very busy?"

Of course...” Of course, I’m very busy. I’ve been gathering resources the entire afternoon to earn money from you!

Nevertheless, Veronica could not say that, so she murmured, “... not.”

“Since you’re not busy, it doesn’t matter when I tell you about the dinner,” Matthew said thoughtlessly and drove away after starting the car engine.

The corner of Veronica’s lips twitched as she thought Matthew was overly domineering

Suddenly, her phone started ringing again—it was a call from Daniella.

Daniella was still cooking in the kitchen when Veronica had a chat with Tony over the phone earlier, so they did not get the chance to talk.

After Veronica picked up the call, Daniella asked directly before she could say anything. “Hey, Roni! How did Xavier’s operation go?”

“O—Operation?”

Veronica’s mind went blank for a second before she suddenly recalled lying about Xavier having an appendectomy when she left this morning.

Giggling, she answered, “Oh, h—he’s fine. It’s just a minor surgery. He’s doing great.”

“Look at you. You left so hastily this morning and were not even willing to bring some chicken for him when I asked you to. And you call yourself his girlfriend?”

Hearing Daniella’s reprimand, Veronica frowned and moved the phone slightly away from her ear.

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Because Veronica was holding her phone in her left hand Matthew overheard Daniella’s voice when the former moved her phone aside

“Xavier truly likes you and he treats you well too. But look at you—you’re his girlfriend and yet, you never show more care toward him. If you continue being like this, others will gossip about you when you guys get married in the future. Roni, Xavier is a good man. Since both of you love each other, you should cherish the relationship you have with him. Your dad and I thought you’re not that young anymore, so we plan to head to Bloomstead to meet Xavier soon to discuss your marriage situation and see if we can set a date for your wedding”

Hearing that, Veronica immediately pressed the phone beside her ear and said, “Mom, hold on. What nonsense are you talking about? I’m still young!”

She was almost driven crazy.

From the very beginning, Xavier and her were merely putting on an act, but when it came to Daniella, she actually started mentioning marriage.

While chatting with Daniella, Veronica did not realize the cold and frosty face of the man sitting next to her.

Both of them love each other? Time to discuss their wedding?

At that moment, Matthew's grip on the steering wheel tightened instinctively as he felt a tightness in his chest, which made him even more frustrated.

"Hey, Mom. Please stop talking about this and quickly go eat the cake with Dad. I still have some matters to attend to, so I'm hanging up first. Bye."

With that, Veronica hung up directly.

"Phew..."

Heaving a sigh of relief, Veronica suddenly felt that she can't keep bluffing her adoptive parents like that. So, she planned to think of a way to set them straight about the situation lest they would go and find Xavier sooner or later to discuss their marriage.

True enough, to hide a lie, a thousand lies were needed.

After keeping away her phone, Veronica looked at Matthew, who was driving and 'couldn't help mumbling, "Why do all of your birthdays have to be so near to each other? You even have the same birthday as my dad."

Wearing a gloomy look, Matthew remained silent and ignored Veronica.

Veronica pouted as she just couldn't understand why Matthew pulled a long face all of a sudden. Nevertheless, she was reminded of her identity as the owner of a wedding planning company now, and so she had to please her main source of income. After all, Matthew was the only customer of her wedding planning company.

"Stop the car. Stop!"

Suddenly, Veronica saw something and shouted for Matthew to pull over.

The latter thought Veronica wanted to buy something for Elizabeth, so he pulled over beside the road, after which Veronica got out of the car and ran away.

In no time, she got back into the car with a bag in her hand. After closing the door and fastening her seatbelt, she took out a small cake with a pink pig design from the paper bag. It was still the mini cake which cost 39 as Veronica was reluctant to spend even a single penny more.

“Hey, my dear cash co-I mean, Bro, I bought you a birthday cake since it’s your birthday today.”

Smiling flatteringly, Veronica took out a candle from her pocket and stuck it beside the ear of the pink pig. After lighting up the candle, she held the cake and looked at Matthew with her head tilted. “Happy birthday, Bro. Let me sing you the birthday

song. Go ahead and make a wish!”

Although Veronica actually did not know when Matthew’s birthday was, she had long heard that he never celebrated his birthday.

So, when Matthew asked her to celebrate his birthday today, she was shocked despite feeling a little unhappy with it.

On the other hand, Matthew switched off the car engine and gazed at Veronica, who wore a fawning look, and thought she must be up to no good.

However, the scene of Xavier and Veronica celebrating their birthday together somehow surfaced involuntarily in Matthew’s mind as he stared at Veronica. When he recalled how Daniella said the two of them were in love with each other just now,

he immediately felt that the cake did not look tasty anymore at once.

“That’s unnecessary,” Matthew blurted coldly before starting the car engine and continuing the journey directly.

“You... Are you crazy? It’s you who asked me to prepare a cake for you, yet you refuse to eat it!”

Veronica’s face darkened at once. Looking at the candle on the small cake, she lowered her head crabily and blew it off.

Then, she took out a fork from the paper bag and started eating the cake in the passenger seat.

It was said that women were capricious, but Veronica actually thought Matthew was even more capricious!

Inwardly, she swore that she would never buy Matthew a cake anymore.

However, just as she had two bites of the cake, the car pulled over all of a sudden.

Matthew glanced at her coldly and reached out his hand to snatch the cake away from her. "It's not your birthday. So, you shouldn't eat the cake."

Biting the fork, Veronica glared at Matthew angrily and mumbled, "I can't eat the cake because it's not my birthday? What domineering rule is that?"

However, Matthew directly snatched the fork from her, took a scoop of the cream cake, and started eating it.

Veronica, who was still trapped in anger, continued babbling, "Didn't you refuse to eat earlier? Why are you eating it now? Matthew Kings, are you insane? This is so frustrating! Why are there people like you on this earth?"

Matthew, who rarely had desserts, ignored Veronica's mutter and savored the cake slowly, which he actually found tasty.

As far as he could remember, his parents did not allow him to have cakes as they claimed that cakes contained too much sugar and were bad for his health. As such, the cream cakes that he had had were specially prepared and were not something like these cakes which were sold in the market at all.

In fact, Matthew thought the cake was very delicious after tasting it.

It could be because the cake was indeed delicious, or because it was bought by Veronica; bite after bite, Matthew continued eating the cake non-stop.

Even though he was eating a cheap cake, he still ate it in a graceful manner. It was as if the gentle, refined personality was engraved in his bones, and he gave off a royal aura from head to toe.

Staring at Matthew in a daze, Veronica was deeply attracted by his extremely handsome face and couldn't help falling for it.

"Do you want some?"

Perceiving her fixed gaze, Matthew thought Veronica was craving some cake, so he took a piece of cake and passed it to her.

As a non-linear thinker, Veronica was reminded of Tony when she saw Matthew passing her a piece of cake, so she heaved a sigh. "It's all your fault. If it wasn't that you brought me back by force, I would have been celebrating my dad's birthday with him at this moment already."

Veronica pouted and sighed with a disappointed look.

At that second, Matthew's hardened heart was moved and actually softened slightly.

With his hand paused, he stared blankly at Veronica and asked involuntarily, "Do you want to go back now?"

"Now?"

Veronica nodded incessantly, but on second thought, she thought it was impossible as it would take at least three hours to reach home from here.

"Ha! It's so far away. There's no way I could rush back in time now." Veronica laughed in a self-deprecating manner.

However, right after she said that, Matthew shoved the cake to her, turned the car around, and accelerated.

Stunned, Veronica realized that the direction he was heading was not the road to the Kings Residence, so she asked, "Hey, where are you going?"

"Sending you home."

"Home?"

Veronica widened her eyes in disbelief. "Y-You're sending me home?"

"Or do you wish to walk back on your own?"

Matthew turned slightly toward Veronica with a captivating, bright smile on his handsome face.

The glow from the sunset shone through the car window and fell on Matthew's face, giving it a golden halo. As a result, not only did he look more handsome indistinctly, but he also became extremely alluring

"I-It's not that... L".

Veronica thought she had misheard him. Scratching her head, she asked in perplexity, "What's wrong with you? Why do you want to send me home all of a sudden?"

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"It's my pleasure to have the same birthday as your father so it would be much livelier if we celebrated our birthdays together."

"But it would be too late even if we go back now."

"It's not too late. It would take us about forty-five minutes to get there," Matthew voiced out and then he took out his phone to send a text message to Thomas.

"Forty-five minutes?"

It was fair to say that Veronica had taken Matthew's words seriously earlier on but right now, she felt that he must be pulling her leg. She leaned back against the front passenger seat and wordlessly finished off the leftover cake that Matthew couldn't finish, the whole time wondering what he was trying to do.

Five minutes later, the car arrived at a large, open space and there was already a helicopter waiting there. After Matthew got out of the car, Veronica followed suit and trailed after him. They then boarded the helicopter and just then, she had an incredulous look on her face.

She finally came to her senses after the door to the helicopter was slammed shut and she heard the whirring sound of the propellers. At that point, she realized that he was actually going to send her home, and it was by the means of a helicopter too!

"Are you actually sending me home?"

At that, Matthew pursed his lips but didn't answer her question. Despite that, Veronica was quite sure that he wasn't lying, so she instantly texted her adopted parents respectively. 'Wait for me. I'll be home in about half an hour.'

After she had sent off the text message, she received a phone call from her adopted parents in no time. Due to the loud noise in the helicopter, Veronica didn't answer the phone but instead, she communicated with them via text message throughout the entire journey.

As such, she was lost in her happy thoughts and she leaned by the window to look outside, a smile on her ruby-red lips. She was clearly in good spirits. Suddenly, she came to the conclusion that Matthew wasn't such a mean person after all.

Thirty minutes later, the helicopter arrived at Cabot Town and landed in South Court, which was the basketball court in town. Subsequently, Veronica and Matthew

got out of the helicopter. As soon as they walked out of the basketball court, the helicopter departed as well.

Meanwhile, Veronica kept her eyes on the helicopter that slowly disappeared into the distance and she couldn't help asking as she reached out to tidy up her hair, which was all messed up from the wind, "How did you know where I lived?"

Meanwhile, Matthew, who was dressed in a suit, tucked a hand into the pocket of his trousers and straightened his necktie before revealing a wicked smile. However, he didn't say a word.

Although Cabot Town was located in a slightly rural area, there were still quite a few people who came out for their evening walk after dinner so coincidentally, they saw the duo get out of the helicopter. In no time, a crowd stood around, watching the duo while whispering amongst themselves.

The two of them walked out of the basketball court and there were already two cars parked outside waiting for them. A man dressed in a suit instantly walked forward to greet them as soon as he saw them walking toward the car. The man then handed over a bunch of keys to Matthew. "Young Master Matthew, I've prepared everything."

"Thank you," Matthew responded before entering the car.

Meanwhile, Veronica got into the front passenger seat. Shortly after that, they drove off gradually and headed toward Veronica's house.

Along the way, Veronica couldn't contain the complicated feeling that arose within her and she found Matthew's behavior slightly perplexing too. Elizabeth had actually invited them over to the Kings Residence for dinner, but Matthew had stood her up and brought Veronica back to Cabot Town to join Veronica's father's birthday celebration. *He obviously doesn't lack friends and family to celebrate his birthday with!*

After considering the situation for a short while, Veronica rubbed her nose awkwardly and asked, "Matthew, do you like me?"

As soon as she said that, the car came to a sudden halt on the road. Meanwhile, Matthew turned to her with a surprised look, and there was a flash of awkwardness in his eyes.

"Why are you staring at me like that? If that's not the case, then why did you suddenly send a helicopter out of nowhere to bring me home to celebrate my father's birthday? You businesspeople are always so cunning, so I'm sure that you must have an ulterior motive here." Veronica was quite sure that she was right.

Just then, Matthew tightened his grip on the steering wheel as his heart pounded furiously. Usually, even in meetings that involved tens of billions, he was much more composed and not as anxious as he was right now. *Are my feelings for her so obvious now?*

"If I say-"

Beep! Beep! Beep!

Suddenly, before Matthew could finish his sentence, a car from behind tooted its horn and interrupted his sentence. At that point, he furrowed his dark brows and turned back to look at the cake on the back passenger seat. He then reached out to push the cake box back into position because it nearly toppled over. "I'm just too bored."

"Bored?" Veronica rolled her eyes at him and she was fully trusting of his words. *Yeah, he must be really bored! Otherwise, why would he have come all the way here? It's so far from Bloomstead!*

Five minutes later, their car came to a stop in front of the entrance of Veronica's old home.

Daniella was anxiously awaiting their arrival under the darkened dusk skies. As soon as she saw the car pull to a stop by their entrance, she instantly came forward to welcome them.

Veronica leaped into Daniella's as soon as she got out of the car. "Mom, I'm back!"

"You reckless girl! You just left in the morning and now you're back again?! Are you here with Xa—"

"Mrs. Murphy, I'm sorry for paying a visit so late at night."

Just then, Matthew took out the cake and a bouquet of flowers from the back passenger seat. Subsequently, he spoke up while walking toward Daniella.

The headlights of the car were still on and at that point, Daniella finally saw that it was actually Matthew. "*Oh—Young Master Matthew, i-it's you!*"

Daniella was very surprised to see Matthew. At that point, she reached out and pinched Veronica's arm before glaring at her. The former's accusing look seemed to be expressing her thoughts of, *Why is it Matthew? Shouldn't it be Xavier with you? You little brat! How dare you flirt with two guys at the same time!*

"Roni mentioned that it's Mr. Murphy's birthday today so as her brother. I should pop over to celebrate with Mr. Murphy too." Matthew no longer maintained his usual cold, indifferent attitude and he amicably chatted with Daniella.

At that, Veronica grumbled to herself, *Roni?! That's such an intimate nickname and it sounds gross! Is he generally so hypocritical?! He's purposely giving me such an intimate nickname in front of Mom! He's indeed a good actor! What a hypocrite!*

"Yeah, Mom. Old Mrs. Kings has acknowledged me as her god-granddaughter and he's her grandson, so I should address him as my brother too."

Just then, Veronica didn't want her mother to jump to the wrong conclusion, so she quickly came up with an explanation.

"Oh—is that so? In that case, come on in, Young Master Matthew. Let's head inside. Our place is slightly shabby, so I hope you won't find the place unbearable."

"Mrs. Murphy, you're too humble."

"Tony, Crayson, hurry up and come out! Look who's back!" Daniella yelled out in the direction of the inner part of the house.

Just then, Tony and Crayson walked out together. Immediately, Veronica ran forward happily and gave Tony a big hug. "Happy birthday, Dad! I came back in a rush, so I didn't bring any presents for you."

"What sort of nonsense are you talking about? I'm happy enough to have you back! Why are you back so late at night?" Tony beamed widely and he was clearly very happy.

"Matthew sent me back."

Veronica smiled happily and walked forward to stand in front of Crayson. Then, she affectionately placed an arm around his shoulders. "Master, let me introduce you guys. This is my... *uh...* brother. His grandmother took me as her god-granddaughter, so he's considered my godbrother."

After she had said that, she turned to Matthew and introduced Crayson. "This is my master, and his name is Crayson."

Crayson held a tobacco pipe in his hand and he took a puff from it. Subsequently, he exhaled and the smoke that came out of the pipe shrouded them slightly, affecting their line of vision.

However, beneath the smoke, there was a change of expression on Crayson's weathered face as his sharp eyes scanned Matthew from head to toe. However, after the smoke dissipated, Crayson lifted his head and chuckled. "He's such a handsome guy. *Ha!*"

Meanwhile, Matthew walked forward and murmured, "Hello, Mr. Murphy. Nice to meet you, Master Crayson."

Matthew was very respectful toward them, and this was the first time ever that Veronica had seen this humble side in him.

"Mr. Murphy, these are from Roni. She bought you a cake and some flowers." Just then, Matthew handed the items to Tony.

“Gosh, look at this girl! Why did you get me another cake after getting me one earlier?!” At that moment, Tony looked at Veronica and heaved a sigh.

“Dad, these are from Matthew.” Veronica was thankful enough to Matthew for being able to get home today so naturally, she didn’t want to take the credit for his kind gesture.

“Alright, alright. Let’s take a seat inside. Why are we all standing by the entrance anyway?!”

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Daniella came forward and led them into the house.

Inside the house, there was already tons of food on the dining table. There was a mixture of vegetables and meat, so it was a well-balanced meal. Besides, there was also a bottle of wine on the table.

“Mr. Murphy, I need to go outside and get something.” After Matthew had said that, he turned around and walked out.

After Matthew had gone out to the courtyard, Crayson rapped the cigarette pipe in his hand on the table and glared at Veronica. “Does he like you?”

“What?! Master, what are you on about?! He has a fiancée.” Veronica brushed him off by waving her hands as she thought that he was being quite indecent.

“Alright, that’s great to know.” Crayson nodded his head solemnly just then.

“What’s great to know?” Meanwhile, Veronica, who was quite confused by his words, couldn’t help asking.

“It’s nothing. I just think that this guy is dressed in expensive-looking clothes and he has a noble air to him, so he would be way out of your league.”

“Yeah, that’s right. Your master’s quite right.” Tony agreed with Crayson too.

Veronica was at a loss for words upon hearing that. “What’s going on in your brains? Gosh!” She shook her head and responded, “Dad, today’s your birthday and it’s also his birthday coincidentally, so he came over to celebrate your birthdays together.”

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As soon as Veronica said that, she also realized how ridiculous the reason sounded and she quickly explained, “This was his grandmother’s idea. Actually, my god grandmother instructed him to come here.”

“Is that so? That does sound reasonable.” At that point, Tony nodded his head and he could finally heave a sigh of relief.

Shortly after that, Matthew came back from outside and he had in his hands a crate of whisky. He carried it into the house and placed it by a corner.

“Oh no! T-This must cost so much!” Although Daniella didn’t drink much alcohol, she knew the cost of it was surely exorbitant.

However, Matthew instantly responded by saying, “Someone else gave it to my family as a gift and we couldn’t finish it, so I just brought it along anyway.”

Subsequently, he offhandedly took out a bottle of whisky from the crate and placed it on the table with a warm smile. “Mr. and Mrs. Murphy, Master Crayson, I’m sorry for keeping you guys waiting.”

The lot of them couldn’t tell the difference between different types of alcohol but Veronica had worked at the Twilight Bar as a security personnel for so long, so she naturally knew that this whisky was very expensive. This was a top-quality aged whisky and the price of it in the market was as expected.

However, Veronica didn’t want her adopted parents to feel any unnecessary burden, so she came up with a feeble excuse. “Mom, there’s plenty of alcohol at theirs and it’s not expensive. Let’s start on our meal, or the food will grow cold soon.”

Subsequently, everyone started eating. It was just some simple home-cooked food and yet Matthew, who was used to delicacies, found that the food actually tasted exceptionally better. He savored them slowly, as it was filled with the taste of a mother’s love.

Everyone enjoyed themselves chit-chatting while they drank some alcohol. The conversation flowed and the vibe was very enjoyable.

Just then, Tony was seated on Veronica’s left while Crayson was on her right. She behaved like a daddy’s girl in front of the two of them and she reached out to tug at

Crayson’s goatee from time to time. “Master, you’re so unfair! You came over to visit my dad on his birthday but you didn’t even turn up on my birthday! As punishment, you must down a glass of whisky!”

“Okay, okay. Fine. I’ll finish off this glass as punishment. I promise to come during spring next year for your birthday.”

“Ha! Okay! You have to keep your word, then!”

"You little brat, how can you behave so disrespectfully! He's your master, so how dare you tug on his goatee?"

"Dad, this is between me and my master, so don't interfere. Come on-it's your birthday today, so here's a toast to you. Happy birthday!" As Veronica spoke, she suddenly remembered Matthew, who was sitting across from her. "Hey, Matthew, it's your birthday too. Thank you for sending me back home today, and here's a toast to you too. Happy birthday!"

Veronica was truly very happy and thankful for Matthew's help.

Meanwhile, he nodded slightly before standing up to propose a toast to Tony. "Happy birthday, Mr. Murphy. Wishing you health and happiness

"*Ha!* Thank you."

They sat together and everyone was quite at ease. Their happy and joyful moment created a warm and inviting vibe that surrounded them. Meanwhile, Matthew, who was engrossed in such a pleasant environment couldn't help feeling quite relaxed somehow.

Compared to the Kings Family, such harmony and happiness were something only in his wildest dreams and it was something that he had never ever experienced before.

He did drink socially and it was either as he partied wildly with his bunch of buddies or during gatherings with his business partners, but he was usually forced to drink on those occasions. Perhaps, to be more accurate, he couldn't avoid drinking at all. However, right now, he truly felt very happy and he was even quite envious of Veronica.

He envied her for being so carefree and she could let loose of herself so easily. He also envied the simple and happy life that she had with an ordinary family.

After their drinking session, Veronica and Daniella cleared the table together before bringing out the two cakes. They placed the cakes on the table and then added candles to them.

Just then, Veronica lit the candles before turning to Matthew and Tony, "There you go-make your wishes. *Uh...* Hold on!"

One of the cakes was ordered by Veronica and it was a 'family-themed' cake, while the other one was ordered by Matthew and there were auspicious birthday wishes on that cake. Just then, Matthew and Tony stood side by side with each other. Meanwhile, the cake ordered by Veronica was placed in front of Matthew, so she had intended to switch the positions of the cake.

"This is the cake I bought for my dad, so it has to be in front of him." She said that while reaching out to shift the position of the cake.

Unfortunately, as soon as she touched the sides of the cake, Matthew slapped the back of her hand. "It's your dad's birthday, so those auspicious birthday wishes on the cake suit him better."

"Yeah, that's right. What's on your mind anyway?" Tony couldn't help interjecting, Meanwhile, Veronica pouted. "Alright, then."

She was kind of displeased as she started to sing the birthday song, "Happy birthday to you, happy birthday to you-

At that moment, Daniella sang along too. As for Crayson, he continued to puff on his cigarette pipe and he turned his dark eyes to stare at Matthew from time to time, but he didn't say a word.

Matthew and Tony both had birthday hats on their heads as they leaned forward to make a wish

Meanwhile, Veronica took photos of the two of them using her phone as she sang loudly.

"Come here, Roni. Let me take a photo of you with them." Daniella turned to speak to Veronica.

"Alright." Veronica handed over her phone to Daniella and then she walked to stand in between Matthew and Tony for a group photo.

Finally, they also took a group photo of all five of them using the timer mode on the phone.

With all of that done, they finally blew out the candles and enjoyed the cakes. However, everyone was quite full from all the alcohol and dinner, so they didn't eat much of the cake.

After dinner, they sat in the courtyard and chatted with each other while enjoying the starry skies.

"Matthew, Roni mentioned that you have a fiancée. Which family does she come from?" Daniella tried to make conversation and she suddenly recalled that so she asked in passing

As soon as she said that, Veronica felt her heart sink and she instantly lifted her head to glance at Matthew. With an awkward chuckle, she muttered, "Mom, why are you asking about that? You wouldn't know her anyway." Veronica was afraid that her mom would kick Matthew out right away if she knew that he was engaged to Tiffany.

“Gosh, it doesn’t matter even if I don’t know her! I’m just trying to strike up a conversation. What do you think, Matthew?”

After their dinner together, they had naturally become much closer and Daniella no longer referred to Matthew like a stranger by addressing him as ‘Young Master Matthew

“It’s just a political marriage,” Matthew replied perfunctorily and instantly changed the topic. “Roni, you never told me that you had a master.”

It was no wonder that Veronica fought so well-it was all because she had a master to guide her. However, for some reason, as soon as Matthew caught sight of Crayson, he felt that this man had a domineering aura and the latter didn’t seem like an ordinary person.

“*Tsk!* There are a lot of things that you’re unaware of.” Veronica suddenly wrapped her hands around Crayson’s neck. “Master, he keeps bullying me. You must teach him a lesson on my behalf later on. I keep losing to him when we fight, so it’s quite upsetting!”

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“*Hmph!* That’s because you are an idiot. The years you have spent learning those skills from me have gone down the drain. Don’t ever declare yourself as my disciple; I can’t afford to be humiliated like this!” Crayson coldly snorted and responded with a look of disgust on his face while smoking a pipe.

Veronica darted a glare at him. “Master, you are so cold-hearted.”

Her words caused the others to burst into laughter, and Matthew enjoyed the relaxing and joyful atmosphere a lot.

They chatted until late at night. In the end, Grayson wanted to go home, so Veronica and Matthew sent him back before they headed back to the house with a torchlight.

The soft hoots of the nightjars echoed in the old, dense and foggy forest. Veronica clung onto Matthew, holding his sleeve with one hand. Her heart was in her mouth.

“You,”

“*Ah!* You startled me!”

Veronica was given a fright when Matthew had barely said a word. She slapped his shoulder and muttered, “You nearly gave me a heart attack!”

“Why haven’t I noticed that you are actually very timid?” As he rarely saw her trembling in fear, Matthew found her current reaction rather amusing.

“Hey, that’s not my fault!” She pouted. “It’s my damn Master’s fault. He told me that this is the path that the grim reapers usually take. Ever since then, I have always been frightened when I pass by this area.”

“Hoot!” As soon as she said that, a nightjar suddenly hooted and it startled her. In response, Veronica grabbed Matthew by his arm and buried her head against his chest, embracing him with all her strength.

At that moment, she could swear to God that this was the most pathetic day she had ever had in her life.

She wasn’t afraid of enemies, height, violence-both verbally and physically-nor was she afraid of darkness when she was living in a vibrant city. Nevertheless, she was afraid of darkness when she was back in her hometown, and she was so terrified to the point of being unable to leave the house at night.

The sudden embrace of the woman warmed Matthew’s chest, and the faint fragrance of her hair that lingered in the air felt familiar and nice.

Matthew froze on the spot. His arms that were hanging by his sides stiffened for a second before he raised them up to pat her on her back. “Nothing’s going to happen. Don’t worry.”

The hand that was holding the flashlight went around her waist while the other gently pinched her earlobe. “Don’t be scared, Roni. I’m here with you.”

His actions felt so familiar to Veronica.

When she was startled as a child, her grandmother used to touch her ear and shout loudly, “Veronica, don’t be scared. I’m here. I’m here.”

An inexplicable sense of reassurance swept over her and her fear diminished.

It was only then did she realize that she was practically glued to Matthew; she could even feel his warmth through the thin layer of clothing between them.

Her petite face flushed crimson as she pushed him away. “Let’s go. I nearly jumped out of my skin.”

“Okay.” Matthew followed her from behind and together they traveled down the mountain.

As they walked, he suddenly asked, “I have a question. Could you help me to analyze it?”

“What do you need me to analyze?”

“I have an... old friend. He is going to marry his pregnant fiancée very soon, but he suddenly realized that he has fallen in love with another woman. Have you ever encountered anything like this?” he asked in an indirect manner.

“Of course not. I’ll give a good beating to this sort of jerk if I ever see one. What a thrash!”

As a woman, Veronica empathized with the woman from Matthew’s story strongly. She glared at him and barked, “As the saying goes, birds of a feather flock together. You are not half-decent yourself. If it wasn’t for the fact that I didn’t diligently practice martial arts with my master, I would have castrated you when you touched me back then!”

Did I step on her toe? “I-I was talking about an acquaintance of mine. What do you think he should do now?” Matthew rubbed his nose guiltily.

“What should he do? This sort of man should be castrated. He impregnated his fiancée and now he wants to leave all the mess behind him? Such an a*shole. Even if he were to marry his fiancée, they wouldn’t be happy after marriage but if he didn’t marry his fiancée, the child she’s carrying would only become a victim. It would also be difficult for his fiancée to have a happy marriage in the future.”

“So...”

“So he should just die! *Hmph!*”

The question reminded Veronica of her past entanglement with Matthew, which enraged her. In a fit of rage, she stomped on Matthew’s foot and twisted her foot for a few seconds before snorting coldly and leaving angrily.

At that moment, even the dark wasn’t scary to her.

Matthew hissed and he wriggled his left toe for a bit before chasing after her.

A jerk? Am I really a jerk? Maybe I am. Otherwise, I wouldn’t have slept with Tiffany when I was intoxicated and impregnated her. Will I choose ‘her’ if Tiffany is not pregnant? By ‘her’, he naturally meant Veronica.

Without giving it any further thought, he went after Veronica and headed back with her.

After they returned home, Veronica directly returned to her room and slammed the door shut behind her.

Daniella naturally noticed her unusual behavior, and so she asked him, “Matthew, what’s wrong with the girl?”

“Roni... fell down when she was walking just now. So, she was mad.”

He randomly found an excuse that even he himself found unbelievable.

Yet, Daniella bought his lie. “Silly girl! She didn’t pay attention while walking and now she’s mad. Forget it, let’s not mind her. Matthew, you can sleep over there; I’ve prepared your bed. You can take a shower in the bathroom too.”

“Thank you, Mrs. Murphy.”

“Drop the courtesy. It’s late; you should get some rest.”

“Alright. Good night, Mrs. Murphy.” With that, Matthew returned to his room.

There were a pair of clean slippers and a set of pajamas in the room. The pajamas looked old-fashioned, so it probably was a new, unworn pajamas that had been bought for Tony.

He briefly washed up and returned to the room to go to bed.

The next morning, after Matthew woke up, he went to the yard, only to bump into Veronica, who was about to go for a jog.

“Good morning.”

He was dressed in a tidy suit that seemed as immaculate as ever, looking bright and energetic as he stood before her. With a warm smile, he greeted her. “Good morning.”

Veronica cast a cold glare at him and directly ran out of the yard to jog along the road.

Seeing that she was still pissed, he didn’t follow along.

“Matthew, why are you up so early? It’s only 6.00 AM. Why didn’t you sleep in a bit?” Daniella, who was busy in the kitchen, walked out and saw that Matthew had gotten out of bed, so she chatted with him.

“I’ve had enough sleep.”

“That’s great, then. I’ve prepared your toothbrush and towel. You can go ahead and wash up,” Daniella said, pointing at the toiletries on the table.

“Thank you, Mrs. Murphy.”

The man was humble and polite. The amiable smile on his handsome face made him seem less intimidating and more friendly.

After his morning routine, Matthew took a walk in the yard. It was rather enjoyable to listen to the chickens chirping, dogs barking and pigs grunting. It was a relaxing country life indeed.

Veronica's house was located by the road. Within the compound, there was a small courtyard, a large yard near the main entrance and a tiny small reservoir at the side.

It was a fine autumn morning. The breeze was cool and a thin mist lingered at the water surface. Meanwhile, crystal-clear water droplets hung at the end of the branches and leaves, and soft chirping of the birds echoed in the background. It was a pleasant atmosphere that relaxed one's body and mind

Daniella, who had done her chores in the kitchen, weni to the yard. She wiped her hands on her apron as she said, "Matthew, is Veronica back? It's almost time for breakfast. Please ask that girl to come back to eat."

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"Okay, sure. I'll go and look for her," Matthew nodded and replied. Then, he walked up to the road and surveyed the surrounding area before she spotted Veronica running in a distance.

He sauntered toward her. The girl in sports attire wore her hair in a ponytail, causing it to sway in the air as she ran non-stop. She seemed exuberant, exuding the vibe of a young lady, which made the man break into a smile that came from his heart.

She ran and ran, and soon arrived before him. "Why are you here?" Veronica impatiently muttered without even glancing at him.

"Mrs. Murphy had me ask you to go home for breakfast."

"Alright." she coldly uttered before she walked around him and left.

However, after barely taking a few steps, Veronica noticed that Matthew didn't catch up with her, so paused in her tracks. Turning her head, she looked at him and asked, "What are you waiting for? Let's go back to eat. We can head over to Bloomstead then."

Matthew tilted his body to gaze at the ripples on the water that were formed by gentle breeze. "The scenery is as pretty as a picture; there's no need for us to rush back."

"No need to rush back?"

There's no such need for you, but there is for me! Veronica grabbed the towel hanging around her neck and wiped the sweat on her fair face, panting as she said, "You are getting married in less than 10 days. You don't see the need to be in a hurry, but there are those who do."

The man raised his dark brows. "That has nothing to do with me."

Upon hearing that, Veronica grumbled to herself, *Damn you! If you don't have anything to do with it, who does?* "No, I'm now in charge of your wedding planning and I'm in the midst of a serious preparation, so we can't afford to delay things."

"I'll contact Thomas to have him take full respon—"

"No!" Before Matthew managed to finish his sentence, Veronica stepped forward in a fluster and interrupted, "Since the task has been given to me, I have to make sure that it is completed. How can I hand it over to Thomas halfway through?"

A person's true intention would be revealed if one failed to maintain their composure. Veronica had been against Matthew's marriage with Tiffany ever since the very beginning. Thus, her current unusual proactiveness caused Matthew to smell a rat.

He turned to her, darting her a profound glance as he appraised her, as though he was trying to penetrate her thoughts through her eyes.

Veronica's heart leapt into her mouth and she was so nervous that she clenched the towel in her hands. She immediately explained, "I've told you that I can help you plan your wedding, but you have to manage your fiancée. If your fiancée steps beyond the line, I'll take action on her. I wish that you won't involve my parents in this. This is our agreement, so I... I have to fulfill it." Her mind started to race in search for an explanation.

Matthew stared at her with a sharp gaze, as though he was secretly analyzing how true her words were.

At that moment, Daniella happened to walk up to the road and she called out to them. "Why are you two standing over there? Come back and have breakfast."

"Okay! Coming, Mom." Veronica responded to Daniella before saying to Matthew, "Let's go back to eat. My parents must have been waiting for some time."

And so, the two of them returned home to have breakfast.

They sat at the dining table and chatted over the meal.

Tony seemed to have recalled something when he raised his head and asked Veronica, "Speaking of which, Veronica, I heard from your mother that Xavier had an appendectomy. How is he doing now?"

“What?” Veronica was stunned by the question at first, but she then let out an awkward smile. “*Oh—he’s fine. He made a speedy recovery.*”

She had randomly mentioned Xavier’s condition previously and yet, they kept that in mind. *Fortunately, I didn’t tell them about my injury; they would be worried sick if I did,* she exclaimed inwardly.

Although her arm had recovered from the past injury, a scar remained and she couldn’t exert too much strength with that arm. Therefore, she had to wear long

sleeves when she went back home, and she paid extra attention to everything she did to hide her injury from them.

“Matthew, when are you two going to return to Bloomstead? I’ll tag along as well. Xavier is dating Veronica now, so it’s only appropriate that we go and pay him a visit after his surgery,” Daniella said to Matthew as she ate.

Matthew scooped up some food and fed it into his mouth. Chewing it slowly, he gazed at Veronica. *Xavier had an appendectomy? Why wasn’t I informed about it?*

Yesterday at noon, when Matthew had gone to his partner’s company, he saw Xavier alive and kicking; the latter looked nothing like a weak patient who just had an appendectomy.

Upon noticing Matthew’s penetrating gaze, Veronica cast him a fierce glare that contained resentment and anger. Then, she smiled at her parents. “Mom, there’s no need to do that. Xavier has been busy lately, so you won’t be able to see him even if you go and visit him.”

As she spoke, she kicked Matthew’s leg under the table, demanding for his cooperation.

It was only then that it dawned on him why she had lied—she probably had no choice but to make up a lie when he had urged her to return to Bloomstead the day before.

Nevertheless, it was also the same incident that allowed him to learn that Veronica was actually in a relationship with Xavier!

“I agree with you, Mrs. Murphy. Since they are currently dating, it’s inappropriate if you don’t go at this time,” Matthew casually chimed in.

As soon as he had said that, Veronica jerked her head in his direction, shooting him a glare so vicious that it could burn a hole in him.

“Matthew Kings, what the hell is wrong with you?!” Using her cutlery to shield her mouth, Veronica thundered at him—silently, though. In fact, the words were mouthed at him, but the intelligent Matthew was able to read her lips.

Instead of being enraged, he flashed a smile at her and said to Daniella, "We will be heading back to Bloomstead shortly after this. You can come along with us."

"That's goo~"

"Mom, that's not good!" Veronica, who had finally run out of ideas, slapped the table in rage. She put down her cutlery and glared at Matthew again before she let out a helpless sigh.

Her reaction startled her parents. "Roni, what exactly happened? Is Xavier very ill?" Daniella's expression fell and she could feel a tightness in her chest.

"You little brat, just tell us-why are you sighing? You are making your mom and I worried," Tony muttered in displeasure.

As things had come to this point, Veronica couldn't hide the truth from her parents any longer.

With her lips pursed, she looked at her adoptive parents guiltily. "Truth is... I'm not dating Xavier. I don't like him at all. We just put up a show to deceive the two of you."

As a matter of fact, it was merely a show that they had put up. With Xavier being a playboy, even if he had some feelings for her, it was surely born out of novelty.

Back then, Veronica had had no choice but to lie that she was in a relationship with Xavier, and that included the time when she had declared to Matthew that she fancied Xavier. After all, she had been wary of the Larson Family, and it was also because of the fact that she was staying in Matthew's apartment at that time. Therefore, she had to use Xavier as an excuse to stop Matthew from having any feelings for her.

At present, Matthew was going to get married soon and Veronica had confessed to him about her relationship with Tiffany. Therefore, she believed that Tiffany wouldn't take any actions on her because of this.

In addition, after the two of them got married, Matthew wouldn't allow Tiffany to do anything to Veronica either.

Hence, the latter had the courage to confess the truth right in front of Matthew.

Then, she added, "I know that you guys think that Xavier has a powerful background and he will protect and support me in the future. However, he is not a good choice for a life partner. Everyone in Bloomstead knows that Xavier is a playboy who has countless women by his side. In fact, I don't like him at all, so the two of us... we can only be friends."

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“You...” At this moment, Tony put his cutlery down on the table with a slam. “What are you talking about?!”

“But if you don’t like Xavier, why did you rush back to Bloomstead yesterday?” Daniella was somewhat disbelieving of Veronica’s words.

Hence, Veronica could only explain, “I rushed back to Bloomstead yesterday because Elizabeth is my god-grandmother. She wanted me to be in charge of Matthew’s wedding plans with his fiancée and when we hit a snag, I had to rush back. I lied because I was afraid I would worry you both.”

Even if this was also a lie, Veronica was secretly vexed with herself for not having thought of this excuse the previous day.

Sitting nearby, Matthew stared at her in stunned silence as her words echoed through his brain.

She said. She doesn’t like Xavier. All of it is just an act!An act...

“You brat! Leave it to you to get up to such nonsense because your father and I spoiled you!” Furious, Daniella threw down her cutlery and stood up, stalking back to her room and slamming the door shut after her.

“Look how angry you made your mother!” Tony shook his head before continuing in a lower voice, “Let’s drop it. Eat your breakfast and once you’re done, you should leave. Your mom will stop being angry at you in a few days.”

Upset and feeling utterly guilty, Veronica hung her head like a child who had done something wrong. “I’m sorry, Dad. I’ve let you both down.”

“Let’s not talk about this anymore. You should eat and leave. I’m going to see your mom.” With a wave of his hand, he followed Daniella into the bedroom.

Just like that, Veronica lost her appetite. Glaring coldly and menacingly at Matthew, she kicked his leg viciously before snapping, “What are you looking at? I bet you’re happy now, you jerk!”

Feeling like he had just been on a rollercoaster, Matthew bit back a yelp of pain before getting up and following her out of the house.

After they got into the car, they left.

On the way back, Veronica stayed silent.

Meanwhile, he was still thinking about what she said.

I know you think Xavier is rich and powerful enough to protect me and keep me safe. Keep her safe? Was it from the Larsons or I?

The question lingered in his brain, and even Matthew himself couldn't come up with a clear answer.

By the time they reached Bloomstead a few hours later, it was already noon.

Driving her up to the entrance of the One Piece Restaurant, Matthew proposed somewhat timidly and with unprecedented gentleness, "Let's have lunch together."

"If you want to eat, you can eat by yourself!" Veronica growled before flinging the car door open and slamming it shut after she got out.

As he watched her stalk away through the rearview mirror, he could not help the smile that curled up at the corners of his lips.

In the following days, the both of them did not see each other.

Veronica changed the name of the newly established wedding company to 'Encounters Bridal Store.!

After hiring a new assistant and a wedding design director, they set up the venue of the wedding together.

Given how busy she was, she had no time to rent a new place and simply slept overnight at her office every day.

Although Matthew called her during that period, she declined his call and simply told him via WhatsApp that she was very busy decorating the wedding venue.

Yet, despite ignoring him, Veronica still went out to eat and drink with Xavier.

Finally, on the night before the wedding, she finished setting up the venue.

However, since the wedding taking place on the next day was Matthew's wedding and thus would be attended by socialites from all walks of life, Veronica couldn't help being somewhat nervous.

Sure enough, it was not easy working for him.

That evening, it wasn't only her, but the entire staff of the bridal company who had to stay back late,

Before they got off work, she called a company-wide meeting and instructed them over and over, "Tomorrow is the wedding ceremony of Matthew Kings. The Kings Family is

the most powerful of The Four Big Families of Bloomstead, and his wedding will be attended by socialites and business tycoons alike. The wedding *must* go off without a hitch. I want all of you to put in all of your effort—that includes the lighting team, the wedding design team, the photography and videography team, and the operations team for hosting, music rehearsal, and video playback.”

Uneasily, Veronica stared at the employees inside the meeting room, afraid that something would go wrong the next day.

In order to get the best deal, she had invested too much and too deeply in this wedding. This meant that if she failed, she would lose everything.

Since she was in dire straits, she could only be determined not to fail.

“Don’t worry, Veronica. We’ll put our all into it.”

“We’ll sink or swim with you, President Murphy!”

“Even the power generators are set up. Unless something unforeseeable happens tomorrow, nothing will go wrong.”

“The makeup and wardrobe team are ready to go at any moment.”

“You don’t need to be too nervous, President Murphy. Matthew Kings’ fiancée is your sister, and she wouldn’t blame you even if anything were to go awry,” someone suddenly uttered in a strange tone amid the crowd.

Even if Veronica hadn’t been with them for long, their investment in this meant they knew not just that Tiffany was the bride, but that she looked exactly like Veronica.

Thus, some of them assumed that Veronica had obtained her oversized wedding order through some connections.

However, as soon as that person spoke, Veronica glanced over sharply. “Put away your pointless assumptions. If we succeed tomorrow, we will be receiving wedding orders nonstop, and you will all profit. If we fail, well... tomorrow will be the day this company dissolves.”

Even though she was doing all of this to earn Mathews money, Veronica had been so busy researching constantly these past few days, and she even sought wisdom from the owner of a well-known wedding company overseas through video-conference calls. She didn’t have the time to eat.

Presently, she told her employees, “Once this wedding goes off perfectly, the company will reward you 400,000.”

Although that was a large number, Veronica had to invest heavily to ensure that the wedding went smoothly.

And then, once she collected her fees from Matthew, that amount of money would be worth nothing.

“Four hundred thousand?”

“Wow! That’s very generous.”

“That’s at least 10,000 per person!”

“We’d better put our backs into it, then.”

Nervous and excited, the employees whispered among themselves.

Before this, the wedding company was doing extremely badly, and the employees were gradually becoming lazier and more passive. Now that Veronica had received such an expensive, luxurious order from the Kingses immediately after taking over, they were becoming excited alongside her.

“After the wedding, we’ll have a celebration feast. When the time comes, we’ll hold a sweepstake, with the grand prize being 150,000 and the lowest prize being an LCD TV. In addition, your salaries will be doubled,” Veronica added.

Just like that, the meeting room was in an uproar. All of the employees were thrilled and even more keen to put all of their efforts into it now.

As the saying went, anyone could be bought if the price was high enough.

Finally having obtained their interest and enthusiasm, Veronica secretly let out a sigh of relief.

Meanwhile, at the Spinfluence Group, even though Matthew was about to get married tomorrow, he was still going through his files and working late into the night.

Upon seeing how late it was, Thomas walked into the office and said, “It’s already in the early hours of the morning, Young Master Matthew, and your wedding with Miss Larson takes place tomorrow. You should get some resi.”

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As his head was suill buried in his work, Matthew stared at the document on his desk and carelessly asked, “How’s the decoration of the venue coming along?”

“The company that Miss Murphy has taken over has given their all the whole time. The result... has exceeded expectations.”

Although Thomas was somewhat worried when the wedding ceremony was first handed over to Veronica and even secretly kept notes on her progress as well as a backup team, he later found out that she had taken over a wedding planning company and was about to submit her proposal to him.

After perusing the proposal, he found that it was perfect and was stunned a few hours ago when he saw the venue that had been erected.

At this moment, Matthew capped his pen after scrawling his signature on the document and raised an eyebrow at Thomas. “Oh? Is that so?”

“You can tell how much work Miss Murphy has thrown into it.”

“When has she ever *not* put any work into earning my money?” Matthew asked with a faint smile. Then, suddenly thinking of something, he continued, “How much is she asking for?”

“Um...” Thomas paused before lifting a hand to rub his nose. “Three hundred million.”

It had to be said that such a prosperous wedding would naturally be exorbitant.

Once again, Matthew raised an eyebrow with a silent smile at Thomas.

Seeing how quiet his boss was, Thomas continued, “A hundred and fifty million has been paid in advance. The rest will be paid after the wedding ceremony.”

“I see.” Matthew inclined his head.

Then, he rose to his feet, walked over to the bar, and poured them each a glass of wine.

After that, he strolled over to the floor-to-ceiling windows and looked at Bloomstead’s nightscape, whereupon he fell into silence.

Frowning slightly, Thomas glanced at Matthew and summoned his courage after a moment of hesitation. “Do you want to see Miss Murphy off after you marry Miss Larson, Young Master Matthew?”

There was an obvious meaning in Thomas’ words He was reminding Matthew that once he married Tiffany, he would have to let go of Veronica.

That was precisely something that Matthew pondered as well.

“Miss Murphy has a strong will and would never yield to others. Once you marry Miss Larson, nothing will ever happen between you and Miss Murphy again.” When it came to Veronica, Thomas rarely brought her up in front of Matthew and would analyze the stakes whenever he had to do so.

As expected, Matthew’s face darkened and his gaze turned cold.

Even though he didn’t like what Thomas said, he had to admit that Thomas was right.

The man casually lifted his glass and downed his drink. Then, after he placed his glass down, he pulled his coat from the rack and strode out of the office, saying, “You don’t need to follow me.”

And just like that, Thomas stopped in his tracks.

After going downstairs, Matthew took a cab to Encounters Bridal Store.

As he glanced up at the out-of-the-way, ramshackle, and sparsely furnished three story wedding company, he shook his head with a helpless smile.

How on earth had this damn woman managed to search for such a place?

And how much would she earn by asking for 300 million?

Pushing open the car door, he stepped out and buttoned up his coat before entering the wedding planning company.

“We’re sorry, sir, but we’re closed-Oh my, y-you’re Young Master Matthew, aren’t you?”

The busy employees in the lobby were prepared to kick their visitor out, only to find that it was Matthew once they fixed their eyes on him.

At this moment, he was in a tailored suit that perfectly complimented his sturdy

figure. Every step he took showed off his aristocratic bearing, and his handsome face was so flawless and beautiful that he resembled a Greek sculpture. It was hard to look away from him.

“Wow, President Kings is so handsome.”

“What do you mean by ‘President Kings? Call him Young Master Matthew. You’re right, though; he truly is an Adonis.”

“He’s even more handsome than he is in the pictures.”

“Y-Young Master Matthew, are you looking for our boss?”

The employees in the lobby flocked to welcome him.

In response, Matthew slightly nodded his head. "Yes."

"Come with me then, Young Master Matthew. President Murphy is still working upstairs." One of the employees gestured in welcome before leading him up to the office on the second floor.

However, when she opened the office door and walked in with him, they discovered that Veronica had fallen asleep at her desk.

Just as the employee was about to wake Veronica up, Matthew held a finger to his lips in a shushing motion. His actions were so suave that they were unintentionally seductive.

A single glance was all it took for the employee to fall head over heels and blush scarlet against her will.

Oblivious to her internal turmoil, he beckoned for her to come with him and the moment they left the office, he asked, "Has she been swamped with work lately?"

"Yes, she hasn't rested well for a few nights because of the wedding."

"I see. Return to your work then."

"Of course, Young Master Matthew. Would you like tea or coffee?" she asked.

"Neither. Go on." After dismissing the employee with a wave of his hand, Matthew entered the office again to gently shut the door behind him before he sat down on the couch to stare at the woman who was sound asleep.

She had already lacked sleep. If she hadn't rested well for the past few nights because of the wedding, he didn't have to be told that she was getting little sleep.

At the thought of it, Matthew couldn't help feeling somewhat guilty since the planning of a wedding shouldn't have been handed to someone unfamiliar with the industry like her. She wouldn't have been under so much stress otherwise.

He sat for a while. It was already one in the morning now, but she showed no signs of waking up.

So, Matthew walked out of the office and dismissed all the employees before returning to her office where he removed his coat and laid it on her.

Alas, his actions had woken Veronica up.

“Hmm... How did I fall asleep?” she mumbled with her eyes shut. “What time is it? Have we inspected the venue-F*ck!” When she saw his gigantic face looming in front of her the moment she opened her eyes, she instantly panicked and woke up. “Matt—*cough*, Bro, what are you doing *here*?”

As her heart pounded, Veronica let out a flattering smile and addressed him in the manner that she was supposed to—’Bro.

“What about it? My little sister has started a company. As her brother, shouldn’t I visit her?” The man had one hand on her desk and the other hand on her shoulder while giving a meaningful smile.

His intent was obvious.

It was enough to cause Veronica’s heart to thump.

F*ck, she was screwed because he had discovered her.

This son of a b*tch couldn’t be here to ask for a discount, could he?

As Veronica’s mind spun rapidly, she shook her head with a sigh. “*Ugh*, don’t bring it up. I initially tried to hire a wedding company to do the planning at first, but once they all heard that it was for the Kings and realized that they might have to close down if they did the project badly enough to offend you all, they refused to take the case. With no other choice, I could only purchase a company and receive your order at great risk,” she explained seriously, willing her heart and her expression not to betray her.

She internally applauded herself for thinking on her feet.

“/ see.” Matthew gave a half smile before responding, “Well, since it’s your company and you’re my little sister, shouldn’t you give me a discount?”

“A discount?”

Chapter 179

*I knew it. Matthew is just another a*shole.*

“Oh, no, no, no. Even if we’re biological siblings, I still wouldn’t give the discount. I have tens of people under my employment and the decor of your wedding venue is all using the state-of-the-art imported materials. Do you know how expensive that is? You can slap me, but you cannot expect me to slap on a different price tag on all this!”

It’s three hundred million we’re talking about here. A ten percent discount already amounts to thirty million. My legs would be broken way before my stance on this matter ever breaks!

Matthew, who had a subtle smile on his handsome face, replied, "Slap you? Sure, but have you thought about whether it would be on the right or left cheek?"

"You choose. Whether it's the right or left cheek, I'm fine with either one."

A determined Veronica stuck her face out in front of him while she braced herself for the slap.

Looking at the petite woman with her short hair that framed her fair, flawless face with a pair of big, bright eyes and long, thick eyelashes at such a close distance, he felt that she looked just like a fluttering butterfly. Her clear innocent gaze made her look playful and adorable.

When she smiled, she looked like the pretty and innocent neighbor girl whom everybody liked. On the contrary, when she had the poker face, she would radiate a sense of femme fatale that fooled people into thinking she was aloof. All of these made him fall head over heels for her.

Although she had displayed a combination of being stand-offish and innocent, there was nothing out of the ordinary.

How could there be such a woman in this world? Matthew never thought that he would be charmed by a woman in that manner one fine day.

"Let's quickly get this over with! Once you have slapped me, I won't have to give you a discount," Veronica reminded as she looked at him.

Listening to her, he laughed out loud. Then, after seeing him raise his hand, she immediately shut her eyes when she saw his hand coming.

Yet, the slap that she waited for never came. Instead, she could feel the man's big and warm palm gently touching her cheek.

Veronica pushed him away with a frown. "Are you actually taking advantage of me right now, Matthew Kings?"

As he staggered backward, the man had a slightly cold look as he grabbed onto her elbow. Stepping back, he placed his thumb directly in front of her nose. "Have a whiff; what does it smell like?"

"Ew, it stinks. Did you poop in your hands or something?" Veronica covered her nostrils in disdain.

Matthew nodded seriously and wiped his hands with a tissue that he took out from under the desk. "I didn't go to the toilet earlier."

“Then, why does your hand stink so badly?”

“You have to ask yourself that question.”

“Ask... myself?”

Veronica was caught in a daze before she subconsciously touched her face. To her surprise, it was moist.

Then, she sniffed her hand. *Oh my, it... really stinks... Is this my saliva? This is so embarrassing that I could die.*

“Hahaha, I was asleep earlier. My apologies for that, hahaha.”

She quickly used a few tissue papers to wipe her face.

As she was in the midst of wiping her face, she noticed the undisguised smile on Matthew’s face. With a stern face, she asked angrily, “What are you smiling at? Don’t you drool while sleeping? Gosh!”

After retracting his smile, he instead answered in a low voice, “Properly wipe your face. You wouldn’t want any sh*t to touch your hands.”

Veronica had never thought that Matthew would use such a vulgar word.

“Get lost!”

“This was what you said.”

As Matthew shrugged, he splayed out his arms and gestured, as if it didn’t involve him.

An annoyed Veronica then laughed at herself.

Although women like her behaved in a tactless manner, they were a straightforward and honest person, which many people would struggle not to like.

Looking at her, Matthew only felt his heart racing. A thought crossed his mind in that instant and it made him want to embrace her there and then, but he did not dare to do so.

He remembered that when he first knew this woman, he had acted in an unscrupulous manner toward her, causing her to be deeply hurt.

She being hurt was something that he wanted to avoid seeing ever again. *So, this is what it feels like when love is so near yet so far.*

“Hello, Earth to Matthew? What are you thinking about? Did you hear me calling you?”

Veronica had already said a few things to him, but he merely stood there and stared at her in a daze.

Waving her hand in front of him, she then pushed him when there was no reaction from him.

This finally made the man regain his composure after being in deep thought. “So, has the wedding venue been fully decorated?”

“It’s all done.” Then, Veronica, who made an ‘OK’ gesture, continued, “Don’t think about deducting even a single cent from the original amount.”

“Okay, let’s go for supper then.”

“Sure, I’m famished.”

After all, the person in front of her was a spendthrift even. Now that Matthew already knew that she had her own company as a wedding planner, Veronica did not dare to offend him.

Seeing as to how she would be receiving the balance of the payment tomorrow once the wedding had ended, it would be unwise of her to offend Matthew at this stage. When the two left the company, they boarded Matthew’s car and left.

“What do you want to eat?” he asked.

After thinking for a while, a sly Veronica replied, “You’re my VIP now, so I should be the one treating you. As you’ll be married tomorrow, let’s eat something simple since you should be resting earlier too.”

“What’s your opinion about me marrying her?”

Matthew, who was driving, hesitated for a while before suddenly asking the question.

Veronica was seated on the front passenger seat and snorted. “What does your marriage to her have to do with me? All you have to do is look after her well. I don’t really have any opinion about this.” *The scum marrying the tramp— what a match made in heaven.*

Her answer was something that he failed to predict, yet he thought that it was within reason.

A hint of disappointment then flashed across Matthew's face.

After a long while, he finally replied, "So, what plans do you have for the future? Are you going to leave Bloomstead?"

"Of course... Forget it. I don't think I will be leaving anytime soon, though."

Veronica originally wanted to leave the city since she no longer wanted to run into the Larsons, but now that she started her own wedding planner company, she had a sweet taste of success and wanted to continue managing it.

Although it was Matthew's wedding tomorrow, it was also a chance for her to promote her business. At that point, there would be more business opportunities for her.

The good days were coming, so why should she leave?

I'm not going to leave.

"I don't think Bloomstead suits you," Matthew uttered after a brief moment of silence.

Moments after he finished speaking, Veronica burst in rage. "Are you crazy, Matthew?"

You were the one who wanted me to come to Bloomstead and now, you're the one who wants me to leave. What? Is Bloomstead your home where you can order me to come and get lost as you wish?"

Bloody hell, does he think that just because he's rich, he can play God?

Although she was livid, he maintained his focus on the road ahead as if he did not hear what she had said.

However, if one had observed carefully, they would notice him tightly gripping the steering wheel and acting like he was holding himself back.

Ever since he was young, Matthew had always been a person with a clear target. Once he had something in his sights, he would stop at nothing to obtain that particular something.

Yet, now that he had everything, he discovered that all he wanted was... actually Veronica herself!

However, reality had a different path for him; Tiffany had saved his life once and now bore his child while his grandmother had contracted Alzheimer's and now wanted great-grandchildren.

The mounting pressure from everything didn't permit him to reject the wedding.

Since it was his responsibility, he had to honor his word.

No matter what one chose in life, one would always lose something in return.

For his case, was there even another option that he could choose from at this point?

There wasn't.

When someone was born into the Kings Family, they were expected to fulfill the part delegated to them.

Chapter 180

As the successor of the Kings Family, his wife had to be someone with both the looks and the background to compliment him.

This was an unwritten iron rule.

After being scolded by Veronica, Matthew did not say anything.

"Turn right in front, we're going to Sam's Food Stall," Veronica said angrily.

Once the car came to a stop, they alighted and walked to the stall.

The stall was already rather empty at 1:00AM.

Now that they were seated outside, they ordered some braised vegetables and barbeque skewers along with two dozen beers and started to drink.

Matthew, who had never been to such a shabby roadside stall, would usually feel disgusted by this place.

However, for some unknown reason, he did not have such thoughts.

It was as if the person sitting in front of him had made everything perfect for him.

After opening two beers, Veronica handed one to Matthew while she was holding another one in her hand. Then, she proceeded to chug it.

"It's boring to just drink beer. Hey, boss, I'll have two bottles of white wine," an unhappy Veronica said as she looked like she had been affected by Matthew's words.

After receiving the order, the stall owner proceeded to serve them with a few bottles of white win.

As Matthew accompanied her to drink, he thought that the alcohol tasted terrible since it had a rough taste and stung his tongue.

However, he wasn't picky and continued to drink with Veronica in the silence.

"Matthew, do you know that you're every bit as loathing as your fiancée? Just because you both have a bit of money and power, you guys think that you can control others as you wish."

A drunken man's words were a sober man's thoughts.

After a few mouthfuls of white wine, Veronica was pointing at Matthew as she scolded him.

The man reached out to take some green beans and took a bite before discovering that it had a decent taste and paired quite well with alcohol.

He was at a loss for words when he listened to Veronica speaking.

The barbecue skewers that they ordered arrived after a short while. Looking at the skewers that were peppered with spices, Matthew frowned and merely stared at it for a long time without touching it.

Noticing his face full of disdain, Veronica rolled her eyes. "What are you staring at? Eat it. It's not like the food is poisoned. Is it really *that* hard to make you eat it?"

Then, as she handed a lamb skewer to him, she added, "Here, try it. I promise you won't die from just a bite!"

For some reason, seeing Matthew act all high and mighty created a flame of rage inside her.

A hesitant Matthew's eyebrows were deeply furrowed as he was still unwilling to have a bite. Then, he finally took the proffered skewer and ate the meat.

At first, all he could taste was the spice. Then, after having more bites, he found that the taste was indeed something refreshing.

He now understood why so many people loved barbecue skewers as it really tasted quite okay in his opinion.

"So, is it tasty?" she asked as she tilted her head.

Matthew nodded. "It's alright."

"See, I told you so. It's not poisonous, so it's edible."

While holding a skewer with one hand and the white wine in the other hand, Veronica toasted, "Let us toast on occasion for... your happy wedding."

"Sure."

"Come, let's toast again. Since you're my brother and a wealthy man, remember to foot the bill tomorrow. Otherwise, our relationship will be considered forfeited."

"Sure."

"Why do you keep saying that? Don't you know how to have a conversation, Matthew? It's boring to talk with you."

"What do you want to talk about?"

"I want to talk about... nothing. This is so frustrating."

Some people would often chat until the conversation suddenly ended in awkward silence.

After being exasperated by Matthew, Veronica drank like there was no tomorrow.

It wasn't long before the two of them emptied all four bottles of white wine, after which she requested for more alcohol from the owner.

The two were caught in a rare moment where they were having a meal together as they sat in the slightly chilly spring night.

While being deep in thought, Matthew frequently gazed at Veronica and felt that his heart was weighed down by a rock, which made it feel heavy.

He had never felt so suffocated before.

Matthew never had a moment when he wanted to make the woman in front of him his than now.

Although he liked her a lot, he did not dare to act on his desire because he was like what Veronica said—just a scummy Casanova.

He did not want her to have an impression of him as a playboy.

Both of them drank until two in the morning where both were already in a drunken stupor then.

"Let's head home," Matthew said.

“We should. Otherwise, we might cause your wedding to be delayed.”

As she rose to her feet, she went to pick up the tab.

When they entered the car, he wanted to send her back home and asked, “Where do you live?”

As he did not know her home address, he thought that Veronica was only living in the office because of her heavy workload.

“At the company. Where else can I live?”

Sitting at the passenger side, Veronica mumbled with shut eyes.

“Tomorrow, I’ll ask Thomas to supervise the wedding venue, so you don’t have to worry too much. I’ll send you home to rest.”

“Send me home? Where? I don’t have a place to stay except at the company.”

She doesn’t have a place to stay?

Matthew decided in the end to bring her back to Twilight Condominium with a sunken heart.

After driving all the way to the condominium’s underground parking lot, he was about to exit the car when he saw that Veronica was already fast asleep in the passenger seat.

The man reached out to help her to unbuckle her seatbelt and carry her upstairs.

As the elevator slowly made its way up from the parking lot, he looked at the woman in his embrace. Her cheeks were slightly flushed as she was sound asleep while leaning against his chest-looking just like a tame kitten.

Ding.

Reaching the top floor, he exited the elevator before heading into his condominium unit and carrying her to the room.

However, the room in question was actually the master bedroom.

Placing her gently on the bed, she turned over as her legs rested on the bedding and continued to sleep after finding a comfortable position.

Standing at the side was Matthew, who silently looked on.

At that moment, every cell in his body was running rampant and disrupting his thoughts. As he leaned beside her, he reached out to hug her.

The woman moved for a bit before she turned to face Matthew and rested her legs on his body while snuggling against his chest. Then, she looked for a comfortable angle before sleeping again.

While hugging her, the faint flowery fragrance emanating from her caused his body temperature to rise even more as he desired her with madness.

Leaning over, he looked at her red lips before going for the kiss.

Her lips, which were so soft and sweet, were like poppy, serving to only make him more infatuated.

“Ugh... Go away...”

Veronica whined as she struggled for a bit before continuing with her sleep.

As he slowly released his embrace, Matthew touched her cheek and played with the messy hair on her forehead as he said uncontrollably, “Roni, if I were to send you to a faraway place after tomorrow, would that be okay?”

If Veronica agreed, he could ignore the world’s objections and still insisted on marrying her.

Yet, she had never once loved him.

If it was in the situation where he had forced her to marry him out of pure selfishness, Matthew could not bring himself to do that.

He did not want to see Veronica depressed.

Yet, at the same time, he could not bear this torrential abuse and emotional torture because he was afraid that he would subconsciously hurt her one day.

So, the best way was to send her away.

Matthew understood that his emotions would be out of control whenever he faced

Veronica!

“Ugh... I don’t want that...”

The woman, who was still in his embrace, actually replied as if she had heard his question.

*D-Do you know that I might harm you one day if you stay here

Finally, he said those words that were hidden deep in the abyss. It was only when she was asleep that he had the courage to say it

“If... If Tiffany hadn't saved me back then, if I hadn't acted impulsively after being drunk in *Castron* where she fell pregnant because of that maybe, just maybe, I *wouldn't* be *marrying her tomorrow.*”